

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PAPER FOR

Adult Basic Education Program

Prepared by:

**ADULT GENERAL EDUCATION
TASK FORCE OF PRACTITIONERS
IN CONJUNCTION WITH
FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
DIVISION OF WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT**

*Charlie Crist
Commissioner of Education*



Florida Department of
Education

www.firn.edu/doe

ADULT EDUCATION:

A Gateway to the Good Life

VISION

All adult education, workforce development, literacy education, community education, and community involvement programs and activities in Florida are delivered through a cost-effective and accountable process by qualified practitioners.

MISSION

The Practitioners' Task Force (PTF) will provide qualified practitioners in Florida the opportunity to consistently review critical program issues and recommend appropriate action plans relative to improving, restructuring, and accountability components for adult education, workforce development, literacy education, community education, and community involvement programs and activities.

“John Richardson once said, *‘When it comes to the future, there are three kinds of people—those who let it happen, those who make it happen and those who wonder what happened.’* We are so excited that the true success of the work of the Adult Education Committee of Practitioners is the result of *‘those who make it happen.’* As a result, many adult learners will benefit greatly from the cooperative efforts of these local practitioners to share knowledge and resources, which promote continuous improvement and attainment of educational excellence.”

—Loretta Costin
Director
Division of Workforce Development

PRACTITIONER TASK FORCE

Adult Education

Literacy Education

Community Education

GOALS

- Facilitate a program improvement process that involves local teachers and administrators
- Collaboratively identify and review with the Department of Education critical issues that impact local programs and services
- Assist in the development and maintenance of a comprehensive accountability system which assesses the performance of programs and services
- Assist in the review of statutes / rules relative to programs
- Develop strategic plan components that clearly define the vision and direction for programs and services
- Facilitate the identification and delivery of staff development / training activities for practitioner

COMMITTEES

Each Practitioner Task Force Committee will:

- Identify and review program issues
- Develop action plans for each issue
- Incorporate accountability components for each issue
- Develop strategic plan components which comprehensively define the vision and direction for programs and services
- Address other issues as requested by the Florida Legislature, the Commissioner of Education and/or the Department of Education, Division of Workforce Development

STRATEGIC AIMS

- Staff Development—teachers, administrators, volunteers, staff, community personnel, business personnel
- Courses—procedures
- Program Standards / Curriculum Frameworks
- Performance Criteria
- Budgets—processes / procedures
- Data Elements—performance-based procedures
- Rules/Regulations —performance-based procedures
- Curriculum—materials / processes
- Program Costs—cost analysis / operations

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Adult Basic Education

INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE

This technical assistance paper is intended to provide local adult education administrators and teachers with information to more effectively implement Adult Basic Education (ABE) and Workplace Readiness Skills programs. The following areas are addressed:

- Courses for Adult Basic Education students, related definitions, and course progression;
- Student eligibility, assessment, and accountability;
- Student services including initial intake, orientation, retention, and follow-up;
- Classroom instruction—curriculum frameworks and alternative assessments;
- Staff development; and
- Suggested materials and resources for implementing ABE and Workplace Readiness Skills.

TERMINOLOGY

ABE Curriculum Frameworks – A minimal set of standards for student achievement in basic literacy and life skills for adults performing below grade level 9.0

Adult Basic Education – Courses of instruction designed to improve the employability of the state's workforce through instruction in mathematics, reading, language, and workforce readiness skills at grade-level equivalency 0.0 - 8.9

Adult Basic Education (ABE) – District program number/Florida Course Code Directory: (9900000)
Community College program number: (CIP 1532.0102000)

ABE Comprehensive – A course that includes language, mathematics, and reading from grade-level equivalency 0.0 to 8.9

ABE Language – Language instruction at four levels from grade-level equivalency 0.0 to 8.9

ABE Mathematics – Mathematics instruction at four levels from grade-level equivalency 0.0 to 8.9

ABE Reading – Reading instruction at four levels from grade-level equivalency 0.0 to 8.9

Benchmark – Knowledge or skills achieved at a specific level; individual skills the student will achieve; answers the question, “What do we want the student to know?”

Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) Number – Number to designate community college programs and courses of instruction

Criterion Referenced Test – An assessment instrument developed and used to estimate how much of the content and skills covered have been acquired by the students assessed. Performance is judged against a set of criteria rather than in comparison to other students tested. An example of a criterion-referenced test would be a teacher-made test of the tests included in the *ABE Florida Assessment Guide*

Final Functioning Level (FFL) – functioning level (grade equivalent as determined by a state-approved assessment instrument) of the adult student at the end of each reporting period

Florida Course Code Directory – Document used by school districts for scheduling, reporting, and certification purposes; Adult General Education (AGE) is Section 6 of this directory

Initial Functioning Level (IFL) – Functioning level (grade equivalent as determined by a state-approved assessment instrument) of the adult student upon initial entrance into an adult education class

Literacy Completion Point (LCP) – Attainment of prescribed academic or workforce readiness skills which qualify the participant for further basic education, vocational education, or employment

Norm Referenced Test – An assessment instrument developed and used to estimate how the students being assessed compare to other students in terms of performance on the test. Individual performance is judged in comparison to other students tested rather than against a set of criteria. An example of a norm-referenced test is the TABE

Portfolio – Selected collections of a variety of performance-based work; examples may include writing samples, open-ended or extended response exercises, extended tasks, etc.

SBER 6A-6.014, FAC – State Board of Education Rule listing state-approved tests and assessment requirements for Adult General Education programs

Standard – General expectation of knowledge and skills development

Workplace Readiness Skills – Employability skills instruction for adult education students

ADULT BASIC EDUCATION COURSE MATRIX

Programs and courses of academic instruction include mathematics, reading, and language with each academic course having Literacy Completion Points (LCPs) designated by letters corresponding to grade-level equivalencies as noted in the following course matrix. An ABE Comprehensive course includes language, mathematics, and reading. Students may not be enrolled in multiple literacy levels for the same subject area course of academic instruction.

Workplace Readiness Skills is a course structured for adult education students designed to provide and/or improve the employability skills of basic education students. ABE students may enroll in mathematics, reading, language, and workplace simultaneously or ABE comprehensive and workplace simultaneously.

Workplace Readiness Skills is a course funded for adult education students designed to provide and/or improve the employability skills of basic education students.

TRACKING STUDENT PROGRESSION IN ADULT BASIC EDUCATION COURSES

Districts and community colleges must be able to track student completions at each Literacy Completion Point (LCP) after student achievement of mathematics, reading, language and workplace readiness standards as stated in the ABE and Workplace Readiness Skills Curriculum Frameworks. Completion and initial enrollment data must be collected and reported from initial student placement to completion of LCPs using Department of Education and Division of Community College data elements.

The *District Workforce Development Information System Data Base Handbook (WDIS)*, created by the Department of Education for school districts, and the *Student Database Data Element Dictionary* for community colleges, identify the data to be collected for tracking and reporting student performance. Both resources address the requirements of Workforce Development as mandated by the Florida Legislature annually. It is imperative that local adult education administrators and respective information services departments use these resources in preparation for reporting requirements.

Adult Basic Education Course Matrix

Course and Functioning Level	Program Numbers	Course Number	CIP Numbers Districts / Community Colleges	Literacy Completion Points
Mathematics	9900000	9900001	CIP 1532.010200	
Beginning Literacy				LCP-A 0.0 - 1.9
Beginning Basic Education				LCP-B 2.0 - 3.9
Intermediate Low				LCP-C 4.0 - 5.9
Intermediate High				LCP-D 6.0 - 8.9
Reading	9900000	9900002	CIP 1532.010200	
Beginning Literacy				LCP-E 0.0 - 1.9
Beginning Basic Education				LCP-F 2.0 - 3.9
Intermediate Low				LCP-G 4.0 - 5.9
Intermediate High				LCP-H 6.0 - 8.9
Language	9900000	9900003	CIP 1532.010200	
Beginning Literacy				LCP-J 0.0 - 1.9
Beginning Basic Education				LCP-K 2.0 - 3.9
Intermediate Low				LCP-M 4.0 - 5.9
Intermediate High				LCP-N 6.0 - 8.9
ABE Comprehensive	9900000	9900004	CIP 1532.010200	LCP-ABCDEFGH JKMN 0.0 - 8.9
Workplace Readiness Skills		9900060	CIP 1532.010500	LCP-A

(Note: The ABE Course Matrix correlates to the National Reporting System. Functioning levels are defined in the Federal Adult Education Act Performance Report DWD 333. See the District Workforce Development Informational System Data Base (WDIS) Handbook for more specific course reporting requirements.)

STUDENT ELIGIBILITY AND ASSESSMENT

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION RULE FLORIDA ADMINISTRATIVE CODE

RULE 6A-6.014(4), FAC, ACADEMIC SKILLS TESTS FOR ADULTS

State Board of Education Rule 6A-6.014 lists the current state-approved academic skills tests that districts and community colleges must use for placement purposes.

The following information on “Student Placement” and “Student Progress” is based on State Board Rule 6A-6.014.

STUDENT PLACEMENT IN EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

The following tests, English language versions only, are approved for placement of students in Adult General Education programs. The purpose of this initial assessment is to place adult education students into the appropriate literacy level as indicated on the ABE Course Matrix provided previously in this paper. Modifications may be made to accommodate adult students with disabilities. See State Board Rule 6A-1.0943 and the Division of Workforce Development “Assessment Technical Paper” for specific procedures and recommendations for accommodations.

- Adult Measure of Essential Skills (AMES) 1997
- Tests of Adult Basic Education (TABE) Complete Battery or Survey Form 1994
- Tests of Adult Basic Education-Work Related (TABE-WR) 1994
- Wonderlic Basic Skills Test (WBST) 1994

If the above testing instruments do not meet the assessment needs of the adult student, one of the following alternative assessment instruments may be used:

- Adult Language Assessment Scales (A-LAS) 1991
- Brigance Employability Skills 1995
- Brigance Life Skills 1994
- Comprehensive Test of Adaptive Behaviors (CTAB) 1986
- Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS) 1996
- Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System - STRETCH (CASAS) 1996
- Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS) Test for Special Populations 1996
- Kaufman Functional Academic Skills Test (K-FAST) 1994
- Literacy Volunteers of America (LVA) English as a Second Language Oral Assessment (ESLOA) 1995

The Department of Education may approve additional assessment instruments as necessary. For additional information regarding SBER 6A-6.014, FAC, and assessment for Adult General Education, you may refer to the *“Assessment Technical Assistance Paper,”* available from the Division of Workforce Development. <http://www.firn.edu/doe/bin00029/ta_rules.htm>

Q: Who makes the decision about which test(s) will be used at the local level by districts and community colleges?

A: The choice of state-approved test(s) for a school district or community college is a local decision. Testing procedures, including instrument(s) selected, should be consistent within the school district or community college.

STUDENT PROGRESS

Documentation of student progress and educational gains is required for workforce development funding and accountability. The following methods, approved in State Board of Education Rule 6A-6.014, FAC, may be used by districts and community colleges to document student progress:

- Criterion and/or norm-referenced pre, post, and progress tests previously listed and/or completion of an LCP. Refer to the test administrator’s manual to ensure validity of pre and posttest results.
- An authorized signature on checklists/inventories based on the ABE Curriculum Frameworks for each LCP. The student must have completed each standard and documentation must be maintained. An ABE student may progress to GED by using the checklists.
- Performance-based portfolios including samples of student work and an evaluation of strengths and weaknesses of samples. The portfolio may contain works in progress, writing samples, open-ended or extended response exercises, or extended tasks.
- Checklists/inventories, criterion and/or norm referenced tests, or the performance portfolio are auditable documents.

The ABE Assessment Guide developed by the ABE Practitioners Committee contains criterion referenced tests based on ABE standards and benchmarks and may be obtained by contacting DOE.

Q: How is performance assessment different from other forms of testing?

A: These methods (above), like all types of performance assessments, require that students actively develop their approaches to the task under defined conditions, knowing that their work will be evaluated according to agreed-upon standards.

Q: How long do you have to maintain records?

A: Documents must be maintained until an auditing procedure is completed by the Auditor General, usually within a three-year period for school districts and seven years for community colleges.

AUDIT FILES AND INFORMATION/STUDENT FILES AND SCHOOL FILES

Audit reports shall be made annually in accordance with Section 216.349, F.S., and Section 10.600 of the Rules of the Auditor General to include:

- Facilities - attendance forms, course number, name, student ID;
- Enrollment/registration forms/student eligibility;
- Teaching certification/qualifications on file;
- Academic - documentation of initial intake/placement; progress of LCPs . (It is crucial that instructors realize the importance of accurately testing, placing students, recording and reporting LCPs to show progress, and maintaining student records.); and
- Documentation of students unable to test, exempted from testing, deferred from testing.

Adult Basic Education

SERVICES FOR ADULT BASIC EDUCATION STUDENTS

ORIENTATION AND PROGRAM PLACEMENT

Student orientation/counseling is an essential element in explaining the demands of the academic program. A clear understanding of expectations will better prepare the student for making sound decisions and successfully completing the program. It is important for students to understand the relationship between improving basic skills and self-sufficiency.

SUGGESTED STUDENT ORIENTATION TOPICS/RESOURCES

- Adult Education Student Handbook (provided to each student)
- School Mission Statement/ Philosophy
- School Calendar
- Attendance Policies
- Code of Student Conduct
- Student Registration and Enrollment Options
- Student Placement Testing
- Student Performance Evaluation
- Counseling/Student Services
- Realistic Goal Setting
- Student Recognition Programs
- Methods of Instruction (competency-based/performance-based)

It is important for students to understand the relationship between improving basic skills and self-sufficiency.

CAREER AND TRANSITION PLANNING

Regardless of age, educational/employment goals, or family economic circumstances, career/transition planning is an important component of every adult student's educational program. This is especially true if the individual has any special needs due to a disability, economic or academic disadvantage, or limited proficiency in the English language. Transition within the Adult Basic Education program would be mastering Literacy Completion Points and moving within (from lower to higher) the four literacy levels.

Transition (placement) from Adult Basic Education to other programs would include entry or advancement to:

- job training
- General Educational Development (GED) testing preparation instruction
- self-initiated employment
- a better job
- workplace readiness skills course
- Adult High School Credit program
- Postsecondary education (vocational-technical, community college, or university)

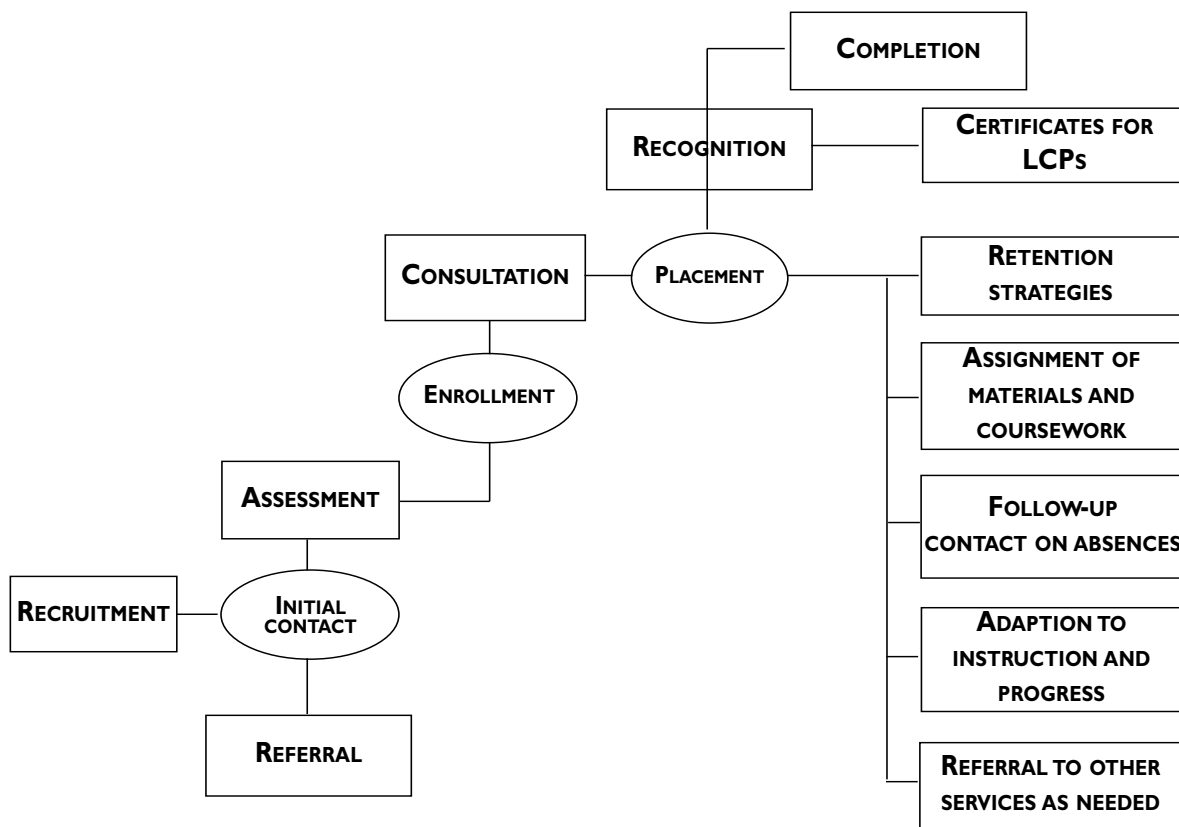
Regardless of age, educational/employment goals, or family or economic circumstances, career/transition planning is an important component of every adult student's educational program.

RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION/FOLLOW-UP PROCEDURES

Recruitment and retention activities are an important part of any Adult Education program. Suggested recruitment activities may include:

- contacting community leaders, network organizations, and agencies for student referrals;
- utilizing a variety of media sources such as local radio, TV, and newspaper; and
- using successful students to provide recruitment activities.

RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION FLOWCHART



COURSE SCHEDULING OPTIONS

Class time, date, location, and length are scheduling options that should be tailored to meet the needs of the institution and the community. District and community college policies and procedures should be taken into consideration.

INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM

Classroom instruction varies among districts and community colleges. Therefore, it is appropriate to select a methodology for each individual local setting and environment. It is recommended that Adult Basic Education performance-based instruction incorporate applied academics, such as health and literacy, pure academics and workplace skills to ensure maximum student performance and preparation for postsecondary education and/or employment. Effective instruction should also include a variety of instructional strategies and resource materials. This should include technology, individualized instruction, cooperative learning, competency-based instruction, student-centered instruction, and teacher-directed instruction. Total integration of ABE instruction into content areas for vocational and workforce readiness requires that instructors be highly knowledgeable about intended outcomes. It is also important to ensure that students understand the relationship between basic skills and success in obtaining their goals to become self-sufficient.

ADULT BASIC EDUCATION CURRICULUM FRAMEWORKS

The Adult Basic Education Curriculum Frameworks, with mathematics, reading and language performance standards, which are divided into Literacy Completion Points (LCPs), provide the instructor with intended student outcomes. This allows the instructor to better meet individual students' needs as instructional plans are established with students.

ABE Frameworks provide a minimal set of standards to be utilized statewide. The purpose of these frameworks is to provide basic literacy and life skills for adults who are performing at or below the 9th grade-level (0.0-8.9). The content develops basic literacy in the areas of mathematics, reading and language. Frameworks are the minimum performance standards developed by practitioners and adopted by the State to provide consistency and quality Adult Basic Education programs in Florida.

WORKPLACE READINESS SKILLS FRAMEWORKS

The Workplace Readiness Skills Frameworks provide the instructor with intended student outcomes designed to improve the employability of adult education students. The instructor may present topic-centered lessons that integrate skills from several standards. The content develops workplace readiness skills that help the student qualify for further education, vocational education, or employment. Documentation of completion of the standards, using the course checklist, signed/dated by the instructor, indicates achievement of the Literacy Completion Point. Assessment using state-approved assessment instrument is not required for placement and completion of this course. However, a pre- and post-assessment component for Workplace Readiness skills is included in the "ABE Assessment Guide" for use as needed.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: What are the Literacy Completion Points (levels) in each adult basic education course?

A: There are four literacy levels in each academic course (mathematics, reading, and language). These levels are: *Level 1 Beginning Literacy* (0.0 to 1.9); *Level 2 Beginning Basic Education* (2.0 to 3.9); *Level 3 Intermediate Low* (4.0 to 5.9); *Level 4 Intermediate High* (6.0 to 8.9).

Q: How many ABE subjects can each student be enrolled in simultaneously?

A: Students can enroll in Workforce Readiness and either the ABE comprehensive course or a maximum of three individual academic classes (reading, language, math). Students enrolled in individual academic courses may enroll in only one literacy level at a time in each course.

Q: How are ABE students placed in classes?

A: Students must be placed in one of the four LCP levels in each academic course or the ABE comprehensive course according to results on state-approved assessment instruments.

Q: How do students move from one LCP level to the next?

A: Students move from one LCP level to the next higher level when they have mastered the performance standards as designated in the curriculum frameworks. An approved assessment instrument, i.e., checklists, inventories, performance-based portfolios, and/or standardized tests must document performance. (Refer to the *Assessment Technical Assistance* paper.)

Q: What is the Literacy Completion Point (LCP) for Workplace Readiness Skills Course?

A: Course completion and attainment of workplace readiness skills, is achievement of the Literacy Completion Point. The computer skills are optional since access to computer technology may not be available to all students. However, it is strongly recommended that students with access to computer technology complete Standard 9.

Q: Which students may enroll in the Workplace Readiness Skills course?

A: Any adult education student, regardless of initial functioning level, may enroll.

Q: What are the auditable documents?

A: See section in this report titled "Audit Files."

Q: Does the TABE Locator Test need to be given to students?

A: Yes, to determine the correct TABE levels to be administered to students.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

Effective staff development begins with marketing the changes in workforce development programs to local administrators, staff, teachers, students, and the community-at-large. It is essential that district and community college representatives statewide attend Division of Workforce Development state and regional training workshops in order to obtain critical information for dissemination and discussion with appropriate personnel in their respective districts or community colleges. The following methods of staff development and training have been suggested to the Division of Workforce Development for future distribution of information:

- Distance Learning
- Internet or on-line training
- CD-ROM
- Video conferencing
- Training (regional and statewide)
- Seminars
- Workshops
- Training manuals for distribution
- List of resources

Effective staff development begins with marketing the changes in workforce development programs to local administrators, staff, teachers, students, and the community-at-large.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT RESOURCES

The ABE Training Guide and video are available for on-going new teacher orientation. To obtain a copy, contact DOE.

Resources and materials for implementing ABE and Workplace Readiness skills are available on the following websites:

<http://www.ABEFlorida.org>

<http://www.floridatechnet.org>

http://www.firn.edu/doe/workforce/adult_ed.htm

<http://literacy.owcc.net>

<http://www.floridahumanresources.org>

S U M M A R Y

- Practitioners in Florida are being faced with new workforce development program requirements as a result of recent legislation. As of July 1, 1998, Adult Basic Education instruction has developed new programs and courses with new course numbers which both districts and community colleges must use. This includes three courses of academic instruction — mathematics, reading, and language — with each academic course having Literacy Completion Points (LCPs) corresponding to grade-level equivalences. Workplace Readiness Skills is a course funded for ABE students designed to provide and/or improve the employability of basic education students. As of July 1, 1999, an ABE comprehensive course was added. This course includes reading, language, and math from 0.0 to 8.9.
- Districts and community colleges must be able to track student completions at each Literacy Completion Point after student achievement of mathematics, reading, language and workplace readiness standards as stated in the ABE and Workplace Readiness Skills Curriculum Frameworks. The *Workforce Development Education Informational System Data Base Handbook (WDIS)*, created by the Department of Education for school districts, and the *Student Data Base Data Element Dictionary* for community colleges identify the data to be collected for tracking and reporting student performance.
- ABE Frameworks provide a minimal set of standards to be utilized statewide. The purpose of these frameworks is to provide basic literacy and life skills for adults who are performing at or below the 9th-grade level (0.0-8.9). The content develops basic literacy in the areas of mathematics, reading, and language. Frameworks are the minimum performance standards developed by practitioners and adopted by the State to provide consistency and quality Adult Basic Education programs in Florida.
- The Workplace Readiness Skills Framework provides the instructor with intended student outcomes designed to improve the employability of basic education students. The instructor may present topic-centered lessons that integrate skills from several standards. The content develops workplace readiness skills that help the student qualify for further basic education, vocational education, or employment.

All task forces are coordinated by the practitioners' professional organization, Adult and Community Educators of Florida, Inc. (ACE).



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